

the system, and they never said the system was rigged.

What we need to do now is to protect our democracy. We need to pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Act. We need to say, as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., said, that one man, one vote is what our country stands for, and it is the strength of our Nation.

One thing about January 6 that bothers me the most—it bothers me the most because I think about my father and his brother. My father quit high school to fight in World War II because his brother was already missing or in a POW camp. He knew he had to join the fight against the oppressions, the tyranny, the fascism that existed. He knew he had to join the fight to uphold the democracy of the United States.

This is a picture of what it looked like to be escorted back into this chamber on January 6. All I could think of when I saw this picture is, obviously, yes, support and gratitude for the military who supported us. But all I could think about was my father and his brother who fought in World War II for these rights, to uphold a democracy, so that I could stand for election and that my friends and neighbors could vote for me, and then I would come here in an environment where I was free to walk into the Capitol at any moment and cast a vote on behalf of the people that I represent.

And yet, on one fateful day, that all changed. And we were no different than some other country who had to use military force to support our democracy here in voting. That is not the way it is supposed to be. That is not what we are fighting for. Many Americans have fought to uphold the democracies of our Nation. The least we could do is pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Act. The least we could do is work in a mission together to pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Act and show that our country believes in holding these important values of a democracy as utmost important. Let's vote to get this done. Let's move forward to show our country we believe in voting rights in the U.S. Senate.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

H.R. 5746

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, Democrats have shamelessly alleged that a massive Federal takeover of elections is needed because of questions some Republicans raised after the 2020 election, so I come to the floor today to show that this whole argument predates the 2020 election.

(Mr. BOOKER assumed the Chair.)

This Democrat reasoning is despite the fact that their proposal predates the 2020 election. The bill that they want us to pass is a product of concerns that the Democrats had about the 2016 election being stolen from Hillary Clinton—also because of the 2018 elections. And, in fact, the Democrat proposal

was designed specifically to double down on false claims that Democrats lost certain elections in 2018 only because of rigged elections.

I have said it before, and I want to say it again: Evidence-free claims of voter suppression are as bad as election-free claims of voter fraud. Both voter fraud and discrimination in voting is illegal. Any claim of voter fraud or violation of voting rights should be resolved in our independent court system with evidence that can stand up in the courts.

And as I have mentioned before, the claims by some Trump supporters that a certain brand of voting machine-switched votes was lifted entirely from the Democrats' 2004 playbook. And you may remember that Democrat House Members challenged the electoral vote count of whether George W. Bush was officially and honestly reelected. And President Trump's questioning of his loss in Georgia was simply following in the footsteps of the losing Democrat candidate for Governor of that State just 2 years before who lost by a much bigger margin and never admitted that defeat.

That makes me wonder if Democrats' professed outrage comes from a sincere concern for Democratic reforms or if they are just upset that President Trump stole their playbook.

If Democrats really want to preserve Democratic norms, they would not be proposing the Federal Government overturning the current electoral process in all 50 States, on a purely partisan basis, with no attempt to even hear out Republicans' legitimate concerns.

The bills that we are talking about this week are being called democracy reform. Does democracy need reform? I support the American democratic system. It does not need a fundamental rewrite. The 240-year history of our great country under this Constitution ought to support that. It works, and it deserves our support. We should not denigrate American democracy for short-term political gain.

President Trump's candidacy in 2016 brought many Americans to the polls who had not voted recently, and there was a record turnout. In 2020, turnout broke the record yet again, both for the Republican Party and the Democratic Party, and President Biden won that election.

In the 2021 election, there were unusually high turnouts for off-year elections to the benefit of Republicans and conservatives. You saw that, particularly in the State of Virginia, where the Republican candidates statewide were victorious, and you saw some surprising turnouts of opposition to Democrats who were reelected in the State of New Jersey.

Democrats accuse Republicans of wanting to keep people from voting. Why would we want to keep people from voting when we have been very successful in many large turnout elections very recently?

Plus, have you seen the polls today that show dissatisfaction with Democrats—a Republican deficit of five or seven points last year, with positive Republican versus Democrat polls this year.

So we ought to stop casting doubt about American elections, stop casting aspersions on commonsense election security measures like ID, supported by overwhelming numbers of Americans of all backgrounds. And by "all backgrounds," I mean even people whom we classify as minorities.

Let's work together to boost the confidence of all Americans in our elections. Let's start rejecting claims that the only way the other party can win is by rigging elections. Let's retire the short-term strategy of falsely claiming that one of the two parties is a threat to democracy. That, in and of itself, is a very undemocratic position to take. This kind of rhetoric damages civil society and erodes faith in our democracy. For the sake of our country, please stop it.

#### FILIBUSTER

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, when Democrats last had the majority and proposed blowing up the Senate rules and the historic way that the Senate has worked, I gave a series of speeches explaining how the father of the Constitution, James Madison, intended for the Senate to be a deliberative body; in other words, a break on the hot passions that occur in the House of Representatives. I repeated my deeply held opposition to gutting the Senate process, even when my party took control of all three branches—and it would have been politically expedient in the short term.

I don't know how many times President Trump brought up doing away with what we call the filibuster or the 60-vote requirement. It was even followed by a lot of our Republican Party grassroots wanting to overcome Democrats' use of the cloture rule to block the Republican agenda during those 4 years. But I spoke out strongly against it.

In 2017, over half of the current Democrat Senators signed a letter calling for preservation of the current rules requiring the 60 votes to stop debate for considering the legislation, despite the use of the nuclear option for nominees.

I agree with President Biden's position in 2005. Reflecting on the same understanding that I have of the Constitution and the role of the Senate as envisioned by James Madison, then-Senator Biden said this:

That is the . . . reason . . . we have the . . . rule. So when one party . . . controls all levers of Government, one man or one woman can stand on the floor of the Senate and resist . . . the passions of the moment.

Even Senator SCHUMER, the majority leader, said, at that time, gutting the cloture rule would be a "doomsday for democracy"—doomsday for democracy. Now it seems like Senator SCHUMER invites that doomsday.